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ABSTRACT

This report is an evaluation of a selected New York City Umbrella program, funded under a special grant from the New York State Legislature. The program, established to service the needs of working parents, children from families where the older siblings had been behind in school achievement, and families with serious social and economic problems, served sixty-three four year old children in East Harlem. The center program consisted of two full-day and two half-day classes. There were fifteen pupils in each class with a teacher and a para-professional. One of the all-day classes was bilingual with instruction in Spanish and in English. The objectives of the program were to provide a stimulating preschool learning environment. In addition, as a result of participation in the bilingual-bicultural class, the pupils were expected to develop a more positive self image. Program personnel included a coordinator, three teachers, three paraprofessionals, and one family assistant. Parents were involved in workshops. This program evaluation indicates that pupil achievement levels in the selected skill areas were above chosen criterion levels and parental involvement in activities was almost attained at proposed criterion levels. (Author/JP)

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EVALUATION REPORT

Function No. 20-63416

EAST HARLEM PRE-KINDERGARTEN CENTER

SCHOOL YEAR 1975-1976

Dr. Cynthia H. Almeida

An evaluation of Selected New York City Umbrella Programs funded under a Special Grant of the New York State Legislature performed for the Board of Education of the City of New York for the 1975-1976 school year.

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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CHAPTER I

The Program

The East Harlem Pre-Kindergarten Center located at P.S.112 in District 4 was designed to provide preschool learning experience for 45 three and four year olds. The center was established to service the needs of working parents, children from families where the older siblings had been behind in school achievement, and families with serious social and economic problems, who could not be admitted into existing programs due to overcrowded classes. A modification of the proposal was necessary in order to accomodate the 60 instead of 45 children that had qualified for admission. This was done by making one of the all-day classes into two half-day classes, thereby doubling the teacher's register. Thus the center was to consist of four classes, two all-day and two half-day, servicing 60 pupils, 15 in each class with a teacher and one paraprofessional. One of the all-day classes was to be bilingual as requested by parents, providing instruction in Spanish and English.

The objectives of the program were to provide a preschool learning environment in which the pupils would build specific intellectual, physical and social-affective skills appropriate to their age levels. In addition, as aresult of participation in the bilingual-bicultural class, the pupils were expected to develop a more positive self-image.

Program personnel allocations consisted of three teachers, three paraprofessionals and one family assistant three days a

week. The coordinator of the center is the principal of P.S.112 and therefore on the regular tax levy budget.

Parental involvement in the center was designed to occur through weekly workshops organised by the family assistant on topics such as health, welfare, housing, local community agencies and their services, and child care. A Mother's Club was to be organised in the center where mothers could meet to learn and share cooking and sewing experiences.

CHAPTER II

Evaluative Procedures

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE I

To determine the extent to which the Pre-Kindergarten Center was implemented in accordance with the specifications in the funding proposal.

Subjects

Four program classes and all program personnel.

Method

Periodic observational visits to the four program classes to observe the instructional program, and visits to a sample of the parent activities, workshop and mother's club. Interviews with all of the personnel involved in the center.

Data Analysis

Observational and interview data to be analysed and presented in narrative form.

Time Schedule

February to May 14.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE II

Objectives 1-3 described in the proposal were synthesised into a single objective by the evaluator in consultation with the coordinator, and reads as follows,

To determine whether as a result of participation in the program: (a) 60% of the three-year old pupils who had attended 60% or more of the scheduled program sessions, had mastered the selected intellectual, physical, and social-affective skills described in the Pupil Progress Checklist; (b) 80% of the four-year old pupils who had attended 60% or more of the scheduled program sessions, had mastered the selected intellectual, physical, and social-affective skills described in the Pupil Progress Checklist.

Subjects

All the pupils enrolled in the center.

Method

Comparison of teacher rating of pupil performance of the skills described in the Pupil Progress Checklist to ascertain whether the chosen criterion levels of mastery had been attained.

Data Analysis

Data to be presented in tabular and narrative form indicating the percentage of pupils achieving mastery of each skill described in the Pupil Progress Checklist for pretest and posttest administrations.

Time Schedule

Pretest and posttest ratings by teachers to be conducted in the fall and spring of the school year.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE III

To determine whether parents participating in 60% of the scheduled workshop sessions will develop proper attitudes towards school as measured by a rating scale on a pretest and posttest basis.

The above described objective was changed in an addendum to read as: to determine whether as a result of participation in the program, 60% of the parents will attend 60% of the parent workshops.

Subjects

All the non-working parents in the program.

Method

Computation of parent attendance for each of the workshops conducted to ascertain whether the chosen criterion level of 60% of the parents attending 60% of the workshops had been attained.

Time Schedule

September to May 14.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE IV

Pupil participants in the Spanish or Black cultural components of the program will develop a more positive self-image and pride in their cultural backgrounds as measured by a scale to be developed by the evaluation agency and administered on a pretest-posttest basis.

The above described objective was deleted from the evaluation design because the evaluation process was to begin in February, five months after the center had begun, thus making pretest ratings impossible to to obtain. An addendum to this effect was filed with the departments concerned.

CHAPTER III

Findings

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE I

To determine whether the Pre-Kindergarten Center was implemented in accordance with the specifications in the funding proposal.

Instructional Program

The Pre-Kindergarten Center was found to comprise two all-day and two half-day classes, with 15 pupils in each class serviced by a teacher and a paraprofessional. One full-day class was bilingual, providing instruction in Spanish and English.

Observational visits to each class revealed all three classrooms to be large, bright, airy with cheery and colorful decorations. Classroom space was more than adequate to accomodate the materials and equipment required and to allow children opportunities to fully utilize the equipment. Each room had a piano, a sink, some kitchen facilities, a bathroom, movable chairs, tables and individual cots for rest or the afternoon sleep. Each room was abundantly stocked with a variety of equipment and games, such as, blocks, trucks, easels, doll's house complete with household furniture and utensils, educational games and puzzles, arts and crafts materials (paste, paper, paint, brushes, scissors, etc.), percussion band instruments, a record player and records, and old wearing apparel for dressing-up and role-playing games. The teachers had also made a variety of materials for decoration and instructional purposes. All the equipment and material were appropriate for the needs of the pupils and were placed within easy reach of the pupils. All materials were

in active use.

The pattern of activities in each class generally consisted of three sections: one-third time to free play, such as playing with blocks, trucks, riding a tricycle, playing in the doll's house or in the sandbox, arts and crafts activities, and playing with puzzles and games; one-third time to readiness activities, such as, alphabet, numbers,naming objects, simple classification, learning names and addresses and many listening and comprehension skills; and one-third time to classroom routines, putting on and taking off clothes, breakfast, lunch, toilet, sleep, going into the school to run, hop, skip, jump, and play with a ball.

Audio-visual equipment were available and observed in use in one class. A variety of curriculum areas were introduced with a couple of trips to places of interest such as the animal farm in Queens being planned for the late spring.

The instructional program was of a high standard and keenly appreciated by the pupils as evidenced by their attendance record and obvious eagerness as they entered the classroom. The bilingual experience demonstrated that four-year olds could move from one language to another with ease and speed. Teacher enthusiam for and commitment to their work contributed much to make the instructional program, a program of quality.

Assessment of pupil growth in the learnings and skills of the program was conducted through teacher ratings of the pupils on selected intellectual, physical and social-affective skills. The skills were identified by the evaluator and approved by the coordinator and teachers of the program. Teacher ratings of pupils occurred in the fall and spring of the school year.

Paraprofessional assistance in the classroom was also of high quality with the teacher-paraprofessional teams demonstrating good working relationships.

The program coordinator provided calm, professional leadership to the program. She was always available, appeared regularly in the classrooms and knew every child by name, thus providing a friendly experience for the pupils and parents, and strong support for the teachers and paraprofessionals. Sound professional supervision contributed much to the success of the program.

Until February of the school year the classes and parents were serviced by a family assistant working three days a week. From March the assignment was made full time, and a second family assistant was appointed to work three days a week. With regard to the pupils, the family assistants had the task of visiting pupils' homes to enquire about absences from school or any other special needs of the children. In the absence of educational assistants, the family assistant substituted, especially at meal times.

The major assignment of the family assistant was to organise and conduct workshop sessions for parents on topics of special interest, health, welfare, housing, child care, etc.. A large, bright, airy room was assigned to the mothers for their Mother's Club activities. Occasionally after leaving their children with the teachers, mothers would stop for a chat with other mothers or to ask a question from the family assistant. Frequently there would be young children with the mothers. Groups of mothers met during the week to learn and share cooking and sewing experiences. Many pretty pieces of work were observed in the making, e.g. woolen poodle dogs, plastic flowers, crochet work, embroidery, and knitting.

The Mother's Club room provided a cheery and interesting meeting place for mothers where the crushing problems of everyday life could be shared and sometimes solved. The family assistant often accompanied parents to the hospital or welfare department when the problems had become very serious. Good working relationships had been established between the family assistants and parents.

All of the recommendations contained in the previous evaluation report with regard to the instructional program and parent involvement were implemented during this program year. The exceptions more bus trips, and a follow-up evaluation study of the program pupils, occurred because of budgetary limitations.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE II

To determine whether as a result of participation in the program: (a) 60% of the three-year old pupils who had attended 60% or more of the scheduled program sessions, had mastered the selected intellectual, physical, and social-affective skills described in the Pupil Progress Checklist; (b) 80% of the four-year old pupils who had attended 60% or more of the scheduled program sessions, had mastered the selected intellectual, physical, and social-affective skills described in the Pupil Progress Checklist.

An analysis of teacher ratings of pupils between the fall and spring as shown in Table 1 indicate substantial growth and learning for all pupils. Fifty-out of sixty pupils attended at least 60% of the scheduled program sessions, with the remaining ten pupils falling below this criterion. The three-year olds attained chosen criterion levels in 43 out of 49 items on the Pupil Progress Checklist, demonstrating the need for additional growth and learning with regard to

Table 1

Pupil Progress Checklist

Items	4-Year-Olds (N = 37)				3-Year-Olds (N = 13)			
	Pupils Showing Mastery				Pupils Showing Mastery			
	Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Intellectual Development								
1. Names 25-30 common objects in the classroom	12	32.4	33	89.2	1	7.7	5	38.5
2. Speech is relatively clear and free of defects	29	78.4	33	89.2	9	69.2	10	76.9
3. Speaks in sentences to express simple needs	30	81.0	35	94.6	7	53.8	10	76.9
4. Shares experiences in conversation	21	56.8	32	86.5	5	38.5	10	76.9
5. Can answer questions about a familiar story	19	51.4	35	94.6	1	7.7	9	69.2
6. Can recall and retell 3-6 details in a story	9	24.3	34	91.9	2	15.4	11	84.6
* 7. Can retell a familiar story in sequence, expressing a beginning, middle and end for story	6	16.2	34	91.9	--	--	--	--
8. Can sing simple songs	32	86.5	34	100.0	6	46.2	11	84.6
9. Expresses curiosity by asking questions	28	75.7	36	97.3	7	53.8	12	92.3
10. Recognizes and names 1-5 alphabets	2	5.4	32	86.5	2	15.4	4	30.8

Table 1 (continued)

Items	4-Year-Olds				3-Year-Olds			
	Pupils Showing Mastery				Pupils Showing Mastery			
	Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Intellectual Development (continued)								
*11. Recognizes and names 5-10 alphabets	2	5.4	31	83.8	--	--	--	--
12. Can locate and name parts of the body	14	37.8	36	97.3	8	61.5	12	92.3
13. Recalls and responds to use of own first/last name	36	97.3	37	100.0	11	84.6	12	92.3
14. Completes 5-piece puzzle	34	91.9	36	97.3	13	100.0	13	100.0
*15. Completes 6-10 piece puzzle	14	37.8	36	97.3	--	--	--	--
16. Classifies 1-3 common objects (fruits, animals and colors)	3	8.1	32	86.5	0	0	5	38.5
*17. Classifies 4-6 common objects	9	24.3	34	91.9	--	--	--	--
18. Recognizes the number of objects 2-4 in a set through such activities as block play, classification games	4	10.3	36	97.3	1	7.7	10	76.9
19. Demonstrates understanding of non-numerical concepts such as up/down, before/after, in/out, under/over, large/small, first/last	19	51.4	36	97.3	8	61.5	13	100.0

Table 1 (continued)

Items	4-Year-Olds				3-Year-Olds			
	Pupils Showing Mastery				Pupils Showing Mastery			
	Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Intellectual Development (continued)								
20. Identifies and names shapes such as: circle, square, triangle and rectangle (3 out of 4)	1	2.7	36	97.3	0	0	11	84.6
21. Identifies and matches 3-5 colors	11	29.7	37	100.0	2	15.4	7	53.8
22. Identifies common sounds: clapping hands, beating drums, ringing bells, street sounds, familiar voices	31	83.8	37	100.0	13	100.0	13	100.0
23. Responds to music with body	36	97.3	37	100.0	10	76.9	12	92.3
24. Recognizes own name in print	17	45.9	36	97.3	2	15.4	12	92.3
25. Explores around the classroom	37	100.0	37	100.0	11	84.6	13	100.0
26. Uses materials and equipment in classroom	34	91.9	37	100.0	11	84.6	13	100.0
Physical and Motor Development								
27. Strings at least 5 beads	15	40.5	29	78.4	0	0	3	23.1
28. Uses scissors to cut pictures	17	45.9	36	97.3	0	0	10	76.9

Table 1 (continued)

Items	4-Year-Olds				3-Year-Olds			
	Pupils Showing Mastery				Pupils Showing Mastery			
	Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Physical and Motor Development (continued)								
29. Manipulates simple toys	36	97.3	37	100.0	13	100.0	13	100.0
30. Draws with crayons	36	97.3	37	100.0	12	92.3	13	100.0
31. Uses paint brushes	35	94.6	37	100.0	12	92.3	13	100.0
32. Hops, skips, jumps	28	75.7	37	100.0	3	23.1	11	84.6
33. Climbs and descends steps/ladders	34	91.9	36	97.3	13	100.0	12	92.3
34. Rides a tricycle	35	94.6	37	100.0	13	100.0	12	92.3
35. Walking and balancing on a plank	33	89.2	36	97.3	13	100.0	13	100.0
36. Throwing and catching a ball with mistakes	22	59.1	36	97.3	1	7.7	13	100.0
37. Feeds self with fork/spoon	34	91.9	37	100.0	13	100.0	13	100.0
38. Spreads jam or butter with a knife	20	54.1	37	100.0	12	92.3	13	100.0
39. Uses toilet independently	36	97.3	37	100.0	12	92.3	13	100.0
40. Dresses oneself (buttons, zippers, laces--at least one)	17	45.9	36	97.3	3	23.1	6	46.2

Table 1 (continued)

Items	4-Year-Olds				3-Year-Olds			
	Pupils Showing Mastery				Pupils Showing Mastery			
	Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Social and Affective Development								
41. Shares materials and equipment	31	83.8	37	100.0	5	38.5	13	100.0
*42. Accepts and follows class routines	32	86.5	34	91.9	--	--	--	--
43. Interacts with other children	33	89.2	35	94.6	9	69.2	11	84.6
44. Participates in group activities	32	86.5	35	94.6	8	61.5	11	84.6
45. Has made friends in the class	33	89.2	35	94.6	11	84.6	11	84.6
46. Knows and uses names of adults in the classroom	34	91.9	37	100.0	12	92.3	12	92.3
47. Knows and uses names of peers in the classroom	35	94.6	37	100.0	13	100.0	12	92.3
48. Accepts and follows through on assigned classroom activities	30	81.0	36	97.3	9	69.2	10	76.9
49. Does not cry when separated from parents and left in school	31	83.8	36	97.3	13	100.0	12	92.3
50. Is happy and relaxed most of the time	34	91.9	36	97.3	9	69.2	10	76.9
51. Works alone and independently for short periods	35	94.6	36	97.3	10	76.9	13	100.0

Table 1 (continued)

Items	4-Year-Olds				3-Year-Olds			
	Pupils Showing Mastery				Pupils Showing Mastery			
	Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Social and Affectife Development (continued)								
52. Adjusts to changes in classroom routines	30	81.0	37	100.0	9	69.2	13	100.0
53. Identifies self as boy or girl in songs, stories	36	97.3	37	100.0	12	92.3	12	92.3
54. Receives and gives affection	35	94.6	36	97.3	11	84.6	13	100.0

*4-year-olds only

independent use of the toilet, stringing at least five beads, recognising five letters of the alphabet, naming 25-30 common objects, classifying fruits,animals, colors, and identifying and matching 3-5 colors.

At the four-year level, the chosen criterion of mastery by 80% of the pupils, was achieved for every single item on the Pupil Progress Checklist.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE III

To determine whether as a result of participation in the program, 60% of the parents will attend 60% of the parent workshops.

The program proposal prescribed weekly workshop sessions, but due to the many problems to be handled for parents and children during the beginning months of the school year and the restricted three-day week for the family assistant, very little was done in the area of parent workshops. A distribution of meeting dates, topics, and speakers along with parent attendance figures are presented in Table 2. The total number of parents (one per family) enrolled in the program was 56 for 60 pupils, since four families had two children each, in the program. Another consideration was the fact that 27 parents(mothers) worked during the day, thus bringing the final total of parents who could participate in the workshops to 29.

The three dates marked with an asterisk denote Mother's Club activities for which there was generally high attendance. But it was parent attendance at workshop sessions that was most encouring, well above the 60% expected level, which occurred in the case

Table 1 (continued)

Items	4-Year-Olds				3-Year-Olds			
	Pupils Showing Mastery				Pupils Showing Mastery			
	Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Physical and Motor Development (continued)								
29. Manipulates simple toys	36	97.3	37	100.0	13	100.0	13	100.0
30. Draws with crayons	36	97.3	37	100.0	12	92.3	13	100.0
31. Uses paint brushes	35	94.6	37	100.0	12	92.3	13	100.0
32. Hops, skips, jumps	28	75.7	37	100.0	3	23.1	11	84.6
33. Climbs and descends steps/ladders	34	91.9	36	97.3	13	100.0	12	92.3
34. Rides a tricycle	35	94.6	37	100.0	13	100.0	12	92.3
35. Walking and balancing on a plank	33	89.2	36	97.3	13	100.0	13	100.0
36. Throwing and catching a ball with mistakes	22	59.1	36	97.3	1	7.7	13	100.0
37. Feeds self with fork/spoon	34	91.9	37	100.0	13	100.0	13	100.0
38. Spreads jam or butter with a knife	20	54.1	37	100.0	12	92.3	13	100.0
39. Uses toilet independently	36	97.3	37	100.0	12	92.3	13	100.0
40. Dresses oneself (buttons, zippers, laces--at least one)	17	45.9	36	97.3	3	23.1	6	46.2

Table 1 (continued)

Items	4-Year-Olds				3-Year-Olds			
	Pupils Showing Mastery				Pupils Showing Mastery			
	Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Social and Affective Development								
41. Shares materials and equipment	31	83.8	37	100.0	5	38.5	13	100.0
*42. Accepts and follows class routines	32	86.5	34	91.9	--	--	--	--
43. Interacts with other children	33	89.2	35	94.6	9	69.2	11	84.6
44. Participates in group activities	32	86.5	35	94.6	8	61.5	11	84.6
45. Has made friends in the class	33	89.2	35	94.6	11	84.6	11	84.6
46. Knows and uses names of adults in the classroom	34	91.9	37	100.0	12	92.3	12	92.3
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48. Accepts and follows through on assigned classroom activities	30	81.0	36	97.3	9	69.2	10	76.9
49. Does not cry when separated from parents and left in school	31	83.8	36	97.3	13	100.0	12	92.3
50. Is happy and relaxed most of the time	34	91.9	36	97.3	9	69.2	10	76.9
51. Works alone and independently for short periods	35	94.6	36	97.3	10	76.9	13	100.0

Table 1 (continued)

Items	4-Year-Olds				3-Year-Olds			
	Pupils Showing Mastery				Pupils Showing Mastery			
	Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Social and Affectife Development (continued)								
52. Adjusts to changes in classroom routines	30	81.0	37	100.0	9	69.2	13	100.0
53. Identifies self as boy or girl in songs, stories	36	97.3	37	100.0	12	92.3	12	92.3
54. Receives and gives affection	35	94.6	36	97.3	11	84.6	13	100.0

*4-year-olds only

independent use of the toilet, stringing at least five beads, recognising five letters of the alphabet, naming 25-30 common objects, classifying fruits,animals, colors, and identifying and matching 3-5 colors.

At the four-year level, the chosen criterion of mastery by 80% of the pupils, was achieved for every single item on the Pupil Progress Checklist.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE III

To determine whether as a result of participation in the program, 60% of the parents will attend 60% of the parent workshops.

The program proposal prescribed weekly workshop sessions, but due to the many problems to be handled for parents and children during the beginning months of the school year and the restricted three-day week for the family assistant, very little was done in the area of parent workshops. A distribution of meeting dates, topics, and speakers along with parent attendance figures are presented in Table 2. The total number of parents (one per family) enrolled in the program was 56 for 60 pupils, since four families had two children each, in the program. Another consideration was the fact that 27 parents(mothers) worked during the day, thus bringing the final total of parents who could participate in the workshops to 29.

The three dates marked with an asterisk denote Mother's Club activities for which there was generally high attendance. But it was parent attendance at workshop sessions that was most encouring, well above the 60% expected level, which occurred in the case

Table 2

Parent Attendance at Workshop Sessions and Related Activities
(N = 29)

Dates	Topic	Speaker	N	%
October 10	School Parents Association	Principal and Family Assistant	22	75.9
*October 31	Parents Luncheon	--	18	62.1
February 11	Teaching Colors, Shapes	Prekindergarten Teacher	12	41.4
March 3	Teaching Numbers	Prekindergarten Teacher	28	96.5
March 11	Examination of Breast	School Nurse	10	34.5
March 24	Health Agencies in the District	District Health Coordinator	10	34.5
*April 14	Trip to the Circus with Teachers and Pupils	--	19	65.5
April 29	Housing Problems	Member--East Harlem Tenants Council	27	93.1
*May 14	Mother's Day Luncheon	--	28	96.5

*Mother's Club Activities

of topics, School-Parents Association, Teaching Numbers, and Housing Problems. Sixty per cent of the total number of workshop sessions(6), amounted to 3.5 sessions, a criterion level that was almost reached by the Center. In view of the fact that parents have limited time to devote to workshops, and that other school-related agencies, such as the school district,also conduct workshops for parents, weekly workshops as part of the Pre-Kindergarten Center are not feasible.

CHAPTER IV

Summary of Major Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary of Major Findings

The East Harlem Pre-Kindergarten Center was organised to provide a preschool learning experience for 60 three and four-year old pupils to build selected intellectual, physical and social-affective skills. The pupils were to come from homes with working parents, from homes where older siblings had been behind in schoolwork, and from families with serious social and economic problems. A parent involvement component was introduced to educate parents to their duties and responsibilities towards their children.

The East Harlem Pre-Kindergarten Center was conducted in complete accordance with the proposal guidelines. Pupil achievement in the selected skills areas were above chosen criterion levels, and parental involvement in the workshop program and Mother's Club activities, almost attained proposed criterion levels.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The East Harlem Pre-Kindergarten Center was an extremely well organised program which provided quality education for both children and parents. Pupil achievement of prescribed skills was

good, a little above criterion level.

In view of the high standards of performance demonstrated, it is recommended that the program be recycled for the year 1976-77 in its present form with one revision, namely, that the schedule of parent workshops be changed from weekly meetings to monthly meetings, with records of attendance maintained for all workshop and Mother's Club activities.